

FALL 2010



Message from Councilwoman Peggy Neely

Dear District 2 Friends and Residents,

The holidays are right around the corner and it's been a very busy summer and beginning of fall for District 2. In August, the community celebrated the open house for the new Black Mountain Police Precinct. The 30,000-square-foot facility includes a community gathering room, an indoor shooting range and holding cells. The new precinct boundaries are from Union Hills Drive to New River Road and from 91st Avenue in the west Valley to Scottsdale Road to the east. I'm happy to report that the construction of the new precinct came in under budget and that the precinct started operating seamlessly on Aug. 23. The next milestone for District 2 will be the opening of the new fire station in District 2. Phoenix Fire Station 72 will have an open house on Saturday, Nov. 13, from 9 a.m. to noon. We look forward to seeing everybody there!



The city of Phoenix is continuing to look at efficiencies and ways we can cut costs to be better stewards of the public's money. One of the steps we are taking as we look for savings is to conduct a thorough efficiency study of the public safety departments. In these challenging times, we're going to continue to work hard to find efficiencies and meet the needs of the community.

I hope you and your family have a wonderful, safe holiday season. As always, please e-mail me at council.district.2@phoenix.gov or call my office at 602-262-7445 if I can be of assistance.

Sincerely,

Peggy Neely
Councilwoman
Council District 2



Black Mountain Precinct

by Lt. Brian DeBenedetto

Hello everyone, we are excited to announce that we are up and running here at the Black Mountain Precinct. I would like to tell you some of the statistics about the precinct. First, we cover 182 square miles in the northern part of Phoenix. We have 152 officers assigned to the precinct and 16 sergeants. Most of the officers that work in this precinct live in the precinct or very close by. The Police Department went through a re-bid process on Aug. 23 which allowed officers to bid for the area they wanted to work instead of being assigned randomly. This helps with the officers having a dedication and commitment to the area they work for.

If you have neighborhood concerns or need to contact someone regarding Block Watch or Phoenix Neighborhood Patrol, please contact one of my community action officers.

My Community Action Squad is almost fully staffed and the sergeant is James Rothschild. My community action officers covering the area east of the Black Canyon Freeway (I-17) are Officers Tim Mitten and Joe Mayfield. West of the Black Canyon Freeway are Officers Manny Valenzuela and Tom Owsley. Detective Scott Gabbert is my abatement detective and Officer Gerald Stuart is my crime free multi-housing officer. All can be reached at 602-495-5002.



We are excited to be here to serve you and we feel we can make a difference in your quality of life in City Council District 2.

New fire station

I'm proud to announce that there will be an open house celebration for the new fire station on Saturday, Nov. 13, from 9 a.m. to noon. The Fire Department will have free car seat safety inspections and kids can try their luck at spraying the fire hoses! Mark your calendars; it should be an exciting event.

Please join me in celebrating the addition of the new fire station and welcoming it into District 2. I also would like to give a big thanks to Fry's Food Stores, which is generously donating bottled water and donuts for the open house attendees.

Call Michelle Miller at 602-495-7398 for more information about the open house.



Open House
Phoenix Fire Station 72
33027 N. Cave Creek Road
November 13, 2010 – 9 a.m. to noon



Police/crime rate success

The city of Phoenix is currently experiencing the lowest crime rates we have seen in more than 20 years. The City Council received a briefing from the public safety manager on Sept. 15 and I wanted to share some excerpts of the information with you to illustrate the Police Department successes in reducing crime in Phoenix.

Since 2006, the number of reported violent crime has been decreasing and reported property crimes have been declining for an even longer period. At the end of 2009, the overall number of reported violent and property crime experienced significant declines of 16.6 and 20.6 percent, respectively, compared to 2008. Crime levels in certain categories such as homicides reached 20-year lows.

The decreases in crime experienced between 2006 and 2009 equate to nearly 27,000 fewer reported victims of both violent and property crime combined. The downward trend has carried over into 2010, based on data through the end of July. In the first seven months of the year, the overall number of reported violent crime incidents in Phoenix decreased 14.9 percent compared to the same period last year. Decreases were experienced in every violent crime category, with the most notable reduction in the number of reported homicides, with 59 reported incidents compared to 96 during the same seven month period last year, for a decrease of 38.5 percent. The number of cleared homicide cases also has increased; at the end of 2009, the clearance rate for homicides was 65 percent, the highest rate in the last 17 years. During the first seven months of 2010, the

clearance rate increased to 79.7 percent, a level not attained in nearly two decades.

In terms of property crime, the overall number of reported incidents during the first seven months of 2010 decreased seven percent compared to the same period last year. Decreases were experienced in every property crime category, including a 6.5 percent decrease in burglary, a 2.7 percent decrease in larceny theft and a 23.2 percent decrease in motor vehicle theft. The decreases in crime experienced so far this year equate to more than 3,400 fewer reported victims of both violent and property crime combined.

The Police Department attributes the decrease in crime in part to programs involving focused crime suppression, targeted enforcement and cooperative efforts with the community and other local, state and federal agencies.

Another success for the Police Department has been the successful expansion to an eight precinct configuration, including the re-bidding of 1,800 sworn personnel. The new configuration began seamlessly operating on Aug. 23 and represents one of the largest, most complex and successful undertakings to be handled by the Police Department in the last two decades. What this has meant for District 2 is the addition of the new Black Mountain Precinct, one of two new police precincts in the city of Phoenix. If you haven't had an opportunity to see the new precinct yet, I hope you will get to, because it is a very important addition for District 2.

Crime still touches our lives and affects our community, but thanks to the partnerships between the police and the community, it is happening less often and fewer people are becoming victims of crime. If you have a concern about crime in your neighborhood, you must call the Police Department to report it. My office also is available to help work together with you to address your concerns.





Volunteering

There are many ways you can get involved in your local government. With city budget reductions that have taken place in recent years, now more than ever there is a huge demand for volunteers who are willing to roll up their sleeves and donate their time and energy to support the community and support the city. There are many different volunteer choices spread across the city, with opportunities for just about every interest and schedule.

One great program, offered by the Neighborhood Services Department, is called the Blight Busters Volunteer Program. Blight Busters are Phoenix residents who take great pride in their neighborhoods. They are trained and equipped to clean up graffiti and remove blight from their neighborhoods. Volunteers receive training on how to use an airless paint sprayer for graffiti abatement, techniques to avoid conflicts, how to address illegal signs in the right of way, use of GPS cameras and other tools and information to keep their neighborhood clean and safe. The volunteers then can go out in the community and apply their training to cover graffiti, remove illegal signs and report blight. Blight Busters provides access to equipment such as GPS cameras and paint to document and remove graffiti. Blight Busters is a great example of the partnerships between the city of Phoenix and our outstanding residents. I have heard from one District 2 resident who appreciates the program because he can remove graffiti on his own, at no cost, and doesn't have to wait for the city to clean it up. The city benefits because it frees up staff to cover other areas, so it's really a win-win situation. Graffiti Busters still is available to paint out graffiti, and it's a great program, but for residents who want to get more involved and play a more active role, Blight Busters is a great option.

If you're interested in getting more information on Blight Busters, please contact William Hogans at 602-534-6696 or visit the NSD website at phoenix.gov/nsd. By working together, we're going to make Phoenix an even better place to live, work and play.

Efficiencies/paperless billing

The city of Phoenix is very conscientious about ways we can be more efficient and save costs. One of the ways that we are lowering costs is by going paperless, which lowers the city's printing costs and is more "green." For example, Phoenix water, wastewater and trash customers now have the option of receiving a monthly e-mail notifying them that their municipal services bill is available for viewing and payment online. To sign up, go to the city website, phoenix.gov, and click on "Sign Up for Paperless Municipal Billing." By doing so, you will no longer receive a hard copy of the bill through the mail and can view it online and submit payment online or over the phone with a credit or debit card. To further simplify billing, there is also the option of choosing AutoPay, a monthly automatic withdrawal from a checking or savings account. As always, you can pay in person at a Water Customer Services Pay Station or Chase Bank branch.

In another move to cut down on printing costs, the City Council recently approved innovation and efficiency changes to allow Phoenix voters to add their name to a list to obtain the sample ballot and publicity pamphlet electronically rather than by mail (the ordinance provides that the e-mail address that a voter provides can only be used for this purpose). Providing the pamphlets electronically will reduce election costs for printing and mailing this information to voters. Currently, the city must print and mail more than 450,000 pamphlets for a citywide election. The list will be implemented in time for the mayor and Council Election on Aug. 30, 2011. The City Council also voted to reduce the number of ballots printed in advance for voting centers. Ballots now will be printed on demand as needed for each day that voting centers are open, at the voting center for each specific voter. The latter process is currently used by Arizona counties at early voting locations and will further reduce printing costs.

These are a couple of examples of the efficiencies the city of Phoenix is implementing. If you have an idea for saving the city money, I invite you to send it to my office at council.district.2@phoenix.gov. We will continue to strive to spend your tax dollars wisely and find ways to be more efficient.



Community member spotlight

I would like to take a little time to spotlight a couple of outstanding community members who are very active in their neighborhoods and are making a difference in our community.

Wayne George

The first person I would like to spotlight is Wayne George. Wayne has been very active in the community, dedicating his time by serving in several volunteer capacities with the city of Phoenix. He participated in the city of Phoenix Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) as a team coordinator in charge of sheltering; he was a member of the Phoenix Budget Advisory Committee; he also attended the training to become a Phoenix Neighborhood Patrol (PNP) member and incorporated the training into the Desert Ridge Block Watch, which he founded. Wayne is currently in his second term serving as a District 2 representative on the city's Neighborhood Block Watch Fund Oversight Committee, a very important citizen committee that evaluates and recommends block watch grant proposals to the City Council for funding. Even after all of these volunteer commitments, Wayne still has the time and energy to attend various District 2 meetings and events to stay up on what is happening in District 2 and around the city.

Echo Mountain Neighborhood Coalition

The Echo Mountain Neighborhood Coalition (EMNC) is an advocate for the Echo Mountain neighborhood and surrounding areas. The EMNC was formed during a city Fight Back program in 2001 and is now made up of both a neighborhood patrol group and block watch. Their goal is addressing various common issues within their boundaries, which are between 16th Street and Cave Creek Road and Union Hills Drive and Bell Road. Rosie and the EMNC have been instrumental in working with the Phoenix Police Department, Community Prosecutor's Office and Neighborhood Services Department to help the residents of their area, which number around 7,000, by addressing quality-of-life issues such as crime, neighborhood preservation/zoning, school parking and many other issues. The EMNC was recently recognized for their efforts in October 2010 when they received a "Neighborhood Champion Award" from the city of Phoenix Prosecutor's Office. The award was given "In recognition of their inspirational and invaluable contribution toward improving the quality of life for the Maryvale Community, by courageously participating in the legal process, which concluded as a momentous win for the entire neighborhood in the battle against graffiti."

Residents like Wayne and groups like the Echo Mountain Neighborhood Coalition, that play such an important role and really make up the heart of our community, are one of the reasons I'm so proud to represent District 2 on the Phoenix City Council. Wayne and all of our active community members, and there are many of you, deserve a big round of applause for all of your time and efforts spent making District 2 a better place. Thank you.